

# Little Free Press

#86

"food for thought since 1969"

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## PRICELESS ECONOMICS

"Economics," according to Random House, "is the science treating of the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services."

In the present world-wide economic system, people take profit or wages for their labor and must pay for products and services. Let's call this the Profit/Wage Economic System.

### Problems

Four major problems exist in the Profit/Wage Economic System:

1. Wars
2. Pollution
3. Starvation
4. Thievery

### Why?

What is the "prime cause" of these four major problems?

1. Wars are started by people who profit from the sale of arms, missiles, military bases and all the supplies and equipment to maintain them, that is sold to governments and rebels. These profiteers may be the same people who enter the conquered nations and grab control of the natural resources and industries and put their puppets in control of the new governments.

Wars are not started by most of the citizens in the U.S. In 1980, 98.6% of the taxpayers, each earned less than \$50,000 adjusted gross income\*. They had neither the power, money, expertise nor the time to start wars. But, there were 4,112 individuals that year, who each made over one million dollars

adjusted gross income. Some of them, had the expertise and the money.

**Wars are for PROFIT!**

2. Industry does the major portion of the polluting and destroying of our environment with its production methods. It extends that destruction by making products that also pollute.

Industry doesn't reclaim and recycle all its wastes and it doesn't produce non-polluting machines, because industrialists make more profit by polluting than by reclaiming and recycling.

**Industry pollutes for PROFIT!**

3. People are malnourished and even starved because there is more profit if products are kept scarce and priced high. The price of land is high and wages are getting lower and jobs are scarcer. Many people are therefor unable to own land and raise their own food. Millions of acres are used for cash-crops that are not essential foods. Millions of acres of land is held off the market by investors and government. This land can't be used by starving people. (Drive across the U.S. and see for yourself, all the unused land.)

**Starvation is caused by PROFIT!**

4. People steal to get things they want, or to get things to sell, to get money to buy the things they want. What people steal, is the profit they gain from their thievery, embezzling or mugging efforts.

94% of the people in prisons and jails in the U.S. in 1980, were in for one form

of stealing or another, that sometimes included murder because their victim was reluctant to give up his/her money or property\*\*.

**Stealing is done for PROFIT!**

### Prime Cause

People will do almost anything if you offer them enough profit or wages, e.g., assassins, mercenary soldiers and politicians. If you can see that PROFIT and WAGES are the "prime cause" of the four major problems in the Profit/Wage Economic System, you may be ready to think about an economic system that will not use Profit or Wages as the motivator.

What (other than profit or wages) motivates people to work? Ask the 84 million volunteers that the U.S. had in 1980\*\*\*. That is more than enough workers to do the essential work in the U.S.

### Alternative to Profit

You want to end wars, pollution, starvation and stealing? Then get everyone to realize the fact that if we all agreed to quit taking pay or profit for work -- there would be no monetary cost of production -- thereafter all products and services could be free of charge. Think of all the useless jobs that will be eliminated when we stop using money, credit and barter.

People's labor produced everything. It caught and tamed the wild horses. It

\*\* Statistical Abstract of the U.S., 1985; American Prisons & Jails, 1980, Vol. 3.

\*\*\* Christian Science Monitor, March 30, 1982.

\* World Almanac, 1983.



discovered and mined the ores. It refined them. It invented and made the tools, machines and built all the buildings. It operates the machines. Labor (with the help of nature) produces all the food. It distributes products. Money produces nothing!

Labor did not produce the natural resources. Neither did capitalists or government. They were here before people. No one can own them if they didn't create them! Not unless we let certain con artists lead us into thinking they "own" the resources. They fooled us into taking jobs as soldiers and police persons, to enforce that "ownership of natural resources and factories idea" on ourselves. With this scam they force us to pay them for the natural resources that our planet has provided, free for taking.

We will need to see through their ownership of resources game and stop enforcing that con-game against ourselves. Then there can be a smooth and easy change-over to a priceless society.

#### PES

This would be a Priceless Economic System (PES) that would end the need for money, credit and barter. The PES would end the reason for the four major problems on our planet. The PES would end the need for governments and taxes.

Think about the trillion dollars per year government costs us. Also think about all the troubles it gives us. Private enterprise can do all the essential work far more efficiently.

The PES would end the reason for unproductive and wasteful make-work jobs. The PES would decrease the

number of working hours for everyone. The PES would change competitive motivation to a cooperative one, which is far more efficient and more fun. (Even copulation is more fun with cooperation than with competition.)

Can you possibly imagine how things will change on this earth when we get smart enough to switch-over to the Priceless Economic System on a world-wide basis?

First of all, the PES will give people control over their own lives. We will then have the time and opportunity to get free vocational testing and counseling. Everyone will have free access to education and on-the-job training. People can then gain employment at a job they can enjoy and get satisfaction from. They will have freedom at work to do their job as they see is best. If they are not treated well at work they can quit because they will get everything, free of charge, just as everyone else will. Then people will work because they desire to -- not because they have to. How much more fun work will be!

Because resources and labor will be free in the PES, automation and robotics can be produced to do the dangerous and boring jobs. This will leave only the creative and interesting jobs for people.

With everything free of charge and available to everyone -- there will be no status or resale possibilities in products. There will be no reason to take more than one needs.

Think how space travel research can accelerate when resources and scientists can be diverted from

war production to peaceful cooperative space research. Then an endless frontier will be opened to people who like to invent (with no budget limits and plenty of free help) and to others who like to explore and then a bonanza for sight-seers.

So how do we inform everyone about the Priceless Economic System? How do we motivate them to help make the change-over? I don't know. I'm doing my little bit by publishing this small free newsletter and a book, I WAS ROBOT (Utopia Now Possible), that describe the Priceless Economic System. It is not enough, but it is the best I can do at this time, with my limited talents.

#### Striving for Utopia

If no one spends time and thought attempting to create Utopia -- things can only get worse. If a few people try -- we might succeed. If many try -- we can not fail. "Whatever the mind can conceive -- it can create. Minds have conceived Utopia . . . now let's create it! Why should we strive for anything but the best? Forget all the stepping stones. They have just tripped us up. Let's take the quantum leap for Utopia!

Hopefully, you who read this, will have better ideas on how to share the Priceless Economic System ideas with people.

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#### LFP Purpose

To help create Utopia on Planet Earth, soonest.

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Please make many copies, if you can relate. Thanks  
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4-1-91 Ernest Mann



# I WAS ROBOT

(Utopia Now Possible)

by Ernest Mann

from Little Free Press, \$7.95 postpaid

## Raves

"I really enjoyed your book, I WAS ROBOT. I immediately took myself off the 'overtime desired' list where I work. It's a small step in the usual scheme of things, but it was a big step for me. I'm really enjoying the extra time to myself -- it's great.

I've also started using your idea/rule of asking myself if I really want to work the extra hours required to purchase some 'thing'. More & more, I say 'no!'

You don't know how often I've thought of you and your book and your ideas over the past month as we endure the madness of the IRAQI 'crisis.' Having read your book, I immediately understood the dynamics behind it all. So simple, really."

T.M., OH

"I attend college. Between classes, I read a copy of two pages from I WAS ROBOT. With it was an order form which I left for others. Please send me more info. on the book and a copy of LFP."

R.K., IL

". . . is part picaresque autobiography, part intellectual quest for freedom and justice, and part radical (and quixotic) economic theory. A fascinating read."

Minnesota Library Assoc., MSRRT Newsletter.

"Mann has for many years disseminated his thoughts on personal and economic emancipation, simpler living, and a price-less economic system via his Little Free Press . . . the book is a compilation of may of his writings and an autobiography, describing how, after 20 years in business in Minneapolis, one Robot transformed himself into an almost free individual human being."

New Environment Bulletin, Syracuse, NY.

"ONLY YOU CAN MAKE YOU FREE says Ernest Mann in his new book . . . I WAS ROBOT takes on the military, government, corporations and all the people who let these powers control their lives."

Tranet, Rangeley, ME.

"The book is just great! The white is so white -- it's like a tablet -- ingest its contents and feel better fast. He is a nonviolent revolutionary at work."

Karen Moore, Duluth, MN.

". . . book is one of a kind. #1. All success in the process. Hat off to you. I will offer I WAS ROBOT, to neighbors, minister, across backyard and around the street, at least put it in their hand, see, feel, it."

Marvine Honea, Marion, IL.

"Finally got around to writing and sharing with you the pleasure I had with I WAS ROBOT. Every now and then I get the book out and re-read sections that I have noted with a magic marker."

T. Kilgore Splake, Munsing, MI

"In the past I have read books on Utopias -- from Moore's Utopia to B.F. Skinner's 'Walden Two' and although leery of our present system, I long thought that Utopias were not feasible -- no one seemed interested, around me, at least. To write a book is one thing, but to take action -- well, I thought that no one had. Thank goodness for you!"

Victor F., AL

"Your book I WAS ROBOT is one of the best books I have ever read. It's brilliant. Your idea of a Priceless Economic System is perfect. I carefully read the steps toward such a system, and believe me I am doing my part the best I can. Your book, at times, made me laugh, it made me cry, it made me ques-

tion things, it has just done so much for me.

A friend of mine loaned me the book and I devoured it in about 6 or 7 days."

Billy H., IL

## Reviews

by Lynn Olson, IN

Mann summarizes his thoughts on page 291: ". . . if we would quit using money, barter and property ownership . . . work at our jobs for free . . . make all products and services free for everyone . . . control our own jobs and keep people informed of all the ways that anyone could make slaves out of us, government would then be unnecessary. Wars and pollution would stop when there was no profit motive." The book discusses Mann's Priceless Economic System (PES) and details its advantages. In the PES there is no price tag on anything. Everything produced is given away to whoever needs or wants it.

Mann finds that profits cause War and other evils and that we waste our lives as wage slaves ("You work for pay, you must obey.") storing up profits for the few who control the government, the military, the media, the corporations, the schools and the legal system.

Mann exposes the system of private property: "Because the Elite group (with their hired soldiers) convinced the earlier passengers that the Elite owned all the staterooms and seats on Spaceship Earth; they made the passengers work, to make Money, to buy tickets, for space on our spaceship . . .

"They allow some of the passengers to own small specks of it. Thus we think that Ownership is a good idea. But the Elite claim ownership to the most and the best of it." ---page 99.

"The Elite claim they own most of the best land, buildings and factories. But how can they own



them---WE built them! And the land was here before they were. They can only own them---IF we work for them as soldiers and force this ownership idea of theirs on ourselves.

"The free game will use a different idea about land. It will be an idea of 'Usership.'"---111.

He exposes the voting game: "We are given a few of 'their' stooges to vote for . . . and no matter who wins---we lose . . . the . . . elected ALWAYS serve . . . the Elite . . ."---page 113.

He offers a solution: "If everyone works as a volunteer, there will not be a monetary cost of goods, so all goods and services can be free of charge. When everything is free there will no longer be a profit in the seven major problems."---page 207.

On how to implement the solution he admits: "I honestly don't know. But perhaps we can each start living FREE as much as we can in our own lives. I give my newsletter away for free."---page 207.

The idea that people will work without being paid has been dismissed by some as impractical. Argued is that "human nature" will not allow people to give away what they produce. But the human species lived for at least a million years before anyone ever received payment for his/her efforts. In the few remaining hunter/gathering societies people still give to others what they hunt, gather or produce without expecting payment. It would seem that Mann's PES has been the prevailing economic system for most of the period of human development.

Mann attaches himself to no movement and adopts no label but his arguments can be found in anarchist, socialist, communist and libertarian ideas of other writers before him. Even the idea of giving away can be found in the New Testament: "Give what you have to the poor . . ." If others have said what he says---what is the value of his book? Man has the gift of writing what is readable. What he writes can be easily read and easily understood. He uses none of the long, involved sentences, erudite terms and academic jargon that plagues

so much of the more scholarly works. Man will be read by ordinary working people who would never attempt the scholarly books if only because he is easy to read and even fun to read. And he should be read by the professors, the scholars and other serious writers who need to learn what readable writing looks like. Many writers could benefit by his example of how to put important ideas into simple, direct, effective and strong statements.

(Reprinted from "Discussion Bulletin" #44, Box 1564, Grand Rapids, MI 49501)

By Dave Hyde, IN

Let me turn to your book I WAS ROBOT, I keep it by my bed amongst the pile of other books that I'm in the middle of reading and every so often I pick it up and open it at random. It's strange because whatever section I turn to always seems relevant to whatever, usually political problem, has my attention at the time.

I think that's because you always cover the basic tactics that are always involved in capitalist power politics. Tactics like the strawman scam, doubletalk, corporate puppets and that behind it all is always money, money, money. The profit motive being the axle of the capitalist car. Your writing reminds me that all the supposedly multifarious economic problems of the world always reduce to the hunt for money -- greed. It leads me to wonder how 'true' some of these conspiracy theories are. I mean, how long have these Profiteers been in business? It seems like forever.

So to me this is what your work addresses: How to be free, realizing that freedom is the absence of applied force. The force being applied is economic -- money based.

by Neal Keating, NY

At the core of Ernest Mann's liberatory project is the theory (and propagation thereof) of what he calls, "The Priceless Economic System (PES)." No theory of reform, the PES is calculated to replace entirely the Wages/profit economy currently dominating the planet, through the basic act of removing the price tags from everything, including labor, sex, food, drugs and rock n roll. Whatever work we do, we do for free, and whatever needs we have, we fulfill for free. What is lost in the PES is the profit motive and the need for money. What is gained is a modern gift-economy.

When the PES is put into effect, about 75% of the current labor force will be freed up (Paul Goodman would argue more like 95%) from work, these jobs becoming obsolete. Thus, there would be little work left, and owing to the absence of the relentless need to create a profit, what work remains will probably cease to be like work at all, but more like play. Gone would be the endless humiliation of selling yourself, timeclocks and general alienation and misery brought on by spending most of your life doing something you don't really care about in the least.

Central to the PES is the idea of abundance in our midst. Here Mann quotes heavily from Bucky Fuller in suggesting that there are more than enough raw materials to provide for a sensual, even aristocratic lifestyle for everybody on Earth, but that through a wages/profit economy, this abundance has been funnelled into a model of scarcity, for the main reason of maximizing profits. The flesh that disappears off a starving body reappears as an increase in a bank account in Switzerland.

What stands out in this particular refusal of the totality of this society is that it comes with a blueprint attached, flawed though it be, for a kind of new amorous world that can be built on the ashes of the horror that is today. Maybe the bad days will end.